

COUNTY OF ERIE,
NEW YORK

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- Elected Officials Roundtable plans first meeting.
- Fighting NYS fee increases.
- Residents honored during Legislative sessions
- New Website makes getting information easier.

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News from Legislator

Edward Rath III

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2



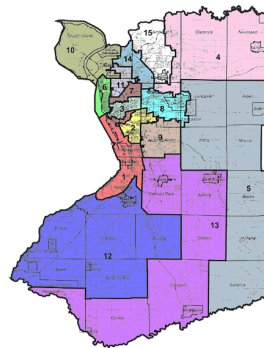
MARCH 2011

Redistricting Underway - 4 seats to be removed

The Advisory Committee on Reapportionment has been meeting to draft a plan that would remove four districts in the Erie County Legislature.

In November voters decided to reduce the size of the Legislature from 15 to 11 districts. An advisory committee is required by charter to develop, and formally submit, a recommendation on how to decrease the Legislature.

Minority Leader John J. Mills announced his appointees on February 9: **Ms. Martha Lamparelli, Mr. Emilio**



Colaiacono, Mr. Jorge S. de Rosas, Mr. Jonathan S. Hickey, Mr. Brian Wittmeyer, and Mr. Brian R. Biggie.

Residents can comment on the process during public hearings. The following hearings have been scheduled:

- 5:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 12 at ECC City Campus Auditorium.
- 5:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 13 at ECC North Campus, K Building Lecture Hall, Room 100.
- 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 14 at ECC South Campus Auditorium, Building 5.

Recent census numbers show that many suburbs increased in population while the City of Buffalo dropped 10%. These figures will be used to draft the final plan, which is expected sometime in May.

Spending held in 2011 Budget

At the end of 2010 Legislator Rath took 154 votes to sustain the County Executive's vetoes and block the Majority Caucus from adding \$8 million in new spending to the 2011 budget.. This resulted in the tax rate being held and taxpayers protected.

In addition, the Caucus fought for \$3 million for libraries to use to keep hours near the 2010 level.

Legislator Rath proudly supported these efforts.



The Erie County Legislature's Minority Caucus remains committed to reform.

Rath Creates Elected Officials Roundtable



Legislator Rath announces the formation of an elected officials roundtable.

On March 15, 2011 Legislator Rath was honored to serve as host of the Amherst Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours event held at Hogan Willig.

Legislator Rath proudly announced to the those in attendance that the first session of the Elected Officials Roundtable will be held **9 a.m. Friday, May 6** at the Amherst Chamber of

Commerce, 350 Essjay Road, Williamsville.

Legislator Rath, in cooperation with Chamber President Colleen DiPirro, created this forum as a way to bring all elected officials together to work on issues affecting Amherst.

An Amherst Issues Priority List will be created and officials will work together,

across geographic and partisan boundaries, to identify the impact of pressing issues. Officials will also discuss potential collaborative solutions that result in positive outcomes for taxpayers.

Reports will be issued to the community on a quarterly basis, framing the issues and providing action updates. To receive a copy, please email edward.rath@erie.gov

"This is another example of failed leadership from Albany. These predatory practices must stop."

Fighting State fee increases

Twice in March, Legislator Rath helped lead the fight against New York State fee increases.

Currently residents who responsibly neuter or spay their dog, and apply for a license, pay a \$1 surcharge for having a spayed or neutered dog. A resolution opposing the surcharge was approved by the County Legislature and a copy was sent to State leaders

in hopes of getting this surcharge dropped.

"This is another example of failed leadership from Albany. First New York State turns the dog licensing process over to municipalities in 2010. Now one year later they impose another excessive fee on our communities. These predatory practices must stop," Legislator Rath said.

The Minority Caucus also went on record opposing a proposed bicycle fee submitted to the Assembly by a downstate assemblyman. Fortunately that item was withdrawn.

Legislator Rath continues to fight for the taxpayers he represents and is proud to report the County isn't playing the tax and spend game.

Supporting ECC development

Legislator Rath continues to fight for a new development at Erie Community College's North Campus in response to news that state funding was blocked. The plan was to build a new Center for Excellence at the North Campus, which was built in 1960. This would be the first major renovation since.

Serving more than 6,880 students, the need for expansion is largely overdue. ECC North has the highest enrollment of the three campuses, with 44.5 percent of the student population.

The new academic building would be approximately 100,000 square feet.

"This is a much-needed project

at ECC North and I will continue to do what I can to make it a reality. I was disappointed to hear that funding was not approved by the State Assembly," Legislator Rath said. "With the New Center for Excellence building we could build on the great programs already offered to ECC students."



New construction at ECC North hit a funding wall recently.

Legislator Rath announces 2011 Winterfest Snow Sculpture Contest Winners



Legislator Rath was honored to serve as judge of the 2011 Williamsville Winterfest Snow Sculpture Contest at Glen Park on Sunday, Feb. 13. Organized by the Village of Williamsville

A Polar Bear named Cindy won.

Youth and Recreation Committee, the Snow Sculpture Contest had more than 20 entrees.

The first place winner of the Snow Sculpture Contest was Amber Lynn Hejza, 14, and her creation of a polar bear. She was assisted by Chelsea Lewandowski, 14; Cassandra Lewandowski, 11; and Jacob Domzalski, 15.

Legislator Rath noted the exceptional attention to detail and size of the polar bear when naming it the winner.

"I'd like to congratulate all of the snow sculpture participants, many of the entries were exceptional in their creativity and attention to detail. I would also like to thank all of the participants for helping to make the Williamsville Winterfest a tremendous event again this year," Legislator Rath said.

Proclamations given to exceptional residents

Members of the community are honored during each Legislative session. During January, February and March the following individuals or groups were honored:

Pat Domin for 30 years of dedicated service on the Erie County Board of Elections.

Town of Amherst Assistant Police Chief Timothy M. Green on his retirement from the police department after 27 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Merrill on celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary.

Nichols Varsity Girls Field Hockey Team, winner of NYSSAIS State Championship.



Legislator Rath presented proclamations to the ECC Men's Hockey Team and Coach Gary Rost on March 17.

Nichols Varsity Girls Soccer Team, winner of the NYSCHSAA State Championship and Monsignor Martin League Champions.

Peter Hunt, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the NYS Commercial Association of Realtors.

Peter Cammarata, recipient of the Meritorious Award from the NYS Commercial Association of Realtors.

Ralph C. Lorigo on receiving the Anthony M. Castiglia Achievement Award from the Italian American Leadership Council.

ECC Men's Hockey Team on winning the National Junior College Athletic Association National Title.

Gary Rost, Erie Community College Men's Hockey Coach, named the National Junior College Athletic Association National Coach of the Year.

Visit the Legislature's New Website!

In February 2011 the Erie County Legislature launched its new, user-friendly Website. Visitors can easily locate and contact their Legislator, find information about meetings and sessions, read the most recent news releases and flip through the photo reels.



To view the new Website, please visit www.erie.gov/legislature.

Don't forget, the Website features a Community Calendar. See what's happening this month. And send your event for inclusion to edward.rath@erie.gov.

Seedling pick-up day is April 16

Just a reminder, if you ordered trees and shrubs, wildflower seed mixes, and seedling packets during the Erie County Soil and Water Conservation District Conservation's Tree and Shrub Seedling Sale, items will be available for pick up on Saturday, April 16 at the Fairgrounds in Hamburg. For information, please call my office at 649-2640.



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Erie County's vision: Erie County will be a world-class community where People want to live, Businesses want to locate and Tourists want to visit.

Thank you for your interest in Erie County government. I believe government is finally recognizing the need for change and

embracing it instead of maintaining the status quo. In the beginning of 2011 we saw a surge of support for drastic Medicaid reform which would save the County millions of dollars annually. Efforts like this must continue.

I am working continuously to bring change to County government and, as always, I look forward to hearing from you about your ideas and concerns.

Sincerely,

Community Photo Gallery



Daisy Troop 345 members are honored with certificates from Legislator Rath at Session.

On Jan. 20 members of Daisy Troop 345 from Amherst lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the Erie County Legislator's second session of the year. The Troop was invited to the session by Legislator Rath who explained the Legislature's duties.



Legislator Rath presents a proclamation to President and CEO Bob Meiss recognizing Asbury Hall's 10th anniversary.

Legislator Rath visited Beechwood Continuing Care's Asbury Hall on Jan. 12 to present a proclamation honoring the center's 10th anniversary. After meeting with (NAME) he spoke with members of one of the center's clubs.



Legislator Rath speaks during the grand opening ceremony of a new business in Williamsville.

On Feb. 24, the grand opening of Century 21 Gold Standard's new office at 5500 Main St., Williamsville was marked with a reception organized in cooperation with the Amherst Chamber of Commerce.